

The flight periods of *Hydraecia micacea* Esp. and *Ennomos quercinaria* Hufn. appear to be significantly advanced. The former was first caught on the 15th (two to three weeks earlier than expected) and the latter was regularly recorded from mid-July (about a month early).

Three individuals of *Calamotropha paludella* Hb. were caught at separate sites on 15th July. This species is only infrequently recorded outside East Anglia, Kent, Hants, Isle of Wight and Dorset (Goater, B. (1986) *British Pyralid Moths*. Harley, Colchester). The Rothamsted captures probably represent a local migration of *C. paludella* as there is no apparently suitable habitat for this species in the immediate vicinity of the traps. This hypothesis is supported by the capture of two *Apamea ophiogramma* Esp. and one *Enargia ypsilon* D. & S. on the same night. Both of these species are also usually associated with damp localities and are unusual in light trap catches on the estate. Further, there was a high level of flight activity on this night with relatively large numbers of all species in the traps.

Single individuals of *Ptycholomoides aeriferanus* H.-S. were caught at separate sites on 14, 19 and 20th July. These records suggest that *P. aeriferanus* is well established at Rothamsted. The national tortrix recorder, E.F. Hancock (pers. comm.) states that this species is well established in southern and south-eastern England, but little is known about the frequency of its occurrence. Further records from the estate network may help to fill this gap in our knowledge.

A single individual of *Acrionicta aceris* L. form *infuscata* Haw. was caught on 21st July. Only the typical form has previously been recorded here.

Thanks are extended to Mrs I. Reay and Mr W.C. Hunt for operating the traps at Empingham and Terrington St Clements respectively and to Ted Hancock for his observations on *P. aeriferanus*. —ADRIAN M. RILEY and MARTIN C. TOWNSEND, Dept. of Entomology and Nematology, Inst. Arable Crops Res., Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2JQ.

Larvae of *Coleophora therinella* Tengström (Lep.: Coleophoridae) in Britain.

Following the note by Mr J.M. Chalmers-Hunt in *Ent. Rec.* **102**: 189-190 and having found an occasional *C. therinella* in my garden moth trap, I searched the nearest known area of *Bilderdykia convolvulus* on the edge of a downland cornfield about half a mile away. Two cases were found on 27th August 1990 but further extensive searching on 30th August and 8th September produced no more cases or signs of feeding. The larva in the larger case continued feeding until at least 3rd September but was found "fixed" on 8th September and the smaller was probably about two weeks behind this. The case is tri-valved, dark brown and covered with fine soil

particles. It is held at approximately 30° to the seed surface and signs of feeding are circular holes with raised edges, the size of the case apertures, on the green seed covering. One seed had two such holes in one surface and one in each of the other two surfaces. Both cases were found on trailers near to the ground and concealed by other vegetation.

I have found no way of distinguishing the imago, usually somewhat rubbed, from the number of other similar species of *Coleophora* that are common in a trap at the appropriate time of the year. I have dissected all *Coleophora* moths coming to my trap since 1986 and this has revealed five specimens (earliest 23rd June, latest 27th July) over five years from Winchester VC11. Dr J.R. Langmaid has had a slightly less number from Southsea VC11 and the late Mr D.W.H. ffennell used to take it regularly but not commonly at his trap at Martyr Worthy VC12. This year Dr P.H. Sterling passed to me all the *Coleophora* that came to his trap at Didcot VC22 and dissection showed that these included one *C. therinella*. This would seem to indicate that the species is fairly widespread but at very low density and that, unless the new knowledge of its larval habits enable more larvae to be found, its true distribution will only be known if the genitalia of all *Coleophora* found between late June and late July are examined.—Col. D.H. STERLING, “Tangmere”, 2 Hampton Lane, Winchester, Hants SO22 5LF.

Unusual dates for imagines of *Mythimna straminea* (Treit.) and *M. comma* (L.) (Lep.: Noctuidae) in 1990.

Whilst enjoying an entomologically exciting holiday at Branscombe in South Devon (see details elsewhere) I was surprised to take a fresh specimen of *Mythimna straminea* (Treit.), the Southern Wainscot, on 1st October. This record was capped when I found a fresh specimen of *M. comma* (L.), the Shoulder Striped Wainscot in my garden trap at Virginia Water, N.W. Surrey, on the night of 24th October.

M. straminea is stated to be univoltine throughout its range and *M. comma* is essentially univoltine in Britain, though occasional second brood examples have been noted. On the Continent this latter species is regularly bivoltine over at least part of its range. I know of no previous October records for *straminea* and the *comma* is the first I have seen in the autumn in 21 years of recording here. Both specimens could have been the result of delayed emergence from the regular June brood (*comma*) or July brood (*straminea*). However, a second generation seems more likely, especially in the case of *comma*.

The extended summers and mild winters we have enjoyed in Britain over the past several years may well have prompted *comma* to adopt the more regular bivoltine habit of this species in Europe. And are the same climatic conditions triggering a possible bivoltine tendency in *straminea*, at least over the most southern part of its range? Certain species are well known to produce an additional generation in those years when the summer is fine